
SENATE COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS

Senator Sabrina Cervantes, Chair
2025 - 2026 Regular Session

AB 1604 (Stefani) - Product safety: proofs of purchase: intentionally added bisphenols

Version: June 22, 2026

Urgency: No

Hearing Date: August 3, 2026

Policy Vote: E.Q. 7 - 0

Mandate: No

Consultant: Ashley Ames

Bill Summary: This bill would prohibit the provision or manufacture of receipts containing intentionally added bisphenol.

Fiscal Impact:

- The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) estimates ongoing costs of about \$999,000 in fiscal year 2027-2028 and \$979,000 annually thereafter (Toxic Substances Control Account [TSCA]) to develop and implement compliance and enforcement activities that would be required by this bill. These costs would be borne by TSCA, which may require an increase to the Environmental Fee. Based on DTSC's current assumptions, the fee would need to be increased by less than 1% to generate sufficient revenues to support the increase in expenditures.

Background: Bisphenols are a family of synthetic chemicals used to make hard plastics and epoxy resins. BPA is the best known and most studied, but manufacturers increasingly use relatives like BPS and BPF as substitutes, especially where BPA has been restricted. BPA shows up in polycarbonate products such as reusable bottles, plastic tableware, sports and safety equipment, and car parts; in the epoxy linings of food and drink cans and water pipes; in dental sealants; and in thermal paper used for store and ATM receipts, transit and parking tickets, and boarding passes. BPS is also increasingly used in thermal paper.

BPA is an endocrine disruptor, meaning it interferes with the body's hormone systems. It has been linked to neurological, immune, and cardiovascular effects, and associated with higher cancer risk, low birth weight, and infertility. Most exposure comes through food, as BPA leaches from containers and can linings; it has been detected in 92% of people, and harm can occur at low doses. Small children face greater risk because they eat more relative to their size. BPS, the most common BPA replacement, is less studied but may be no safer — a 2020 literature review found it linked to metabolic problems like gestational diabetes that BPA was not, more toxic to the reproductive system than BPA, and equally capable of promoting certain breast cancers, concluding it should be regulated the same way. Under Proposition 65, OEHHA listed BPA for female reproductive effects in 2015 and developmental effects in 2020, and listed BPS for female reproductive toxicity in December 2023 and male reproductive toxicity in January 2025. Other bisphenols are not yet Prop 65-listed, though bisphenols as a group are on the Safer Consumer Products Candidate Chemical List.

Most receipts are thermal paper coated with chemicals that let images form quickly, and handling them can transfer BPA through the skin. Retail workers — disproportionately younger women and lower-income people — carry about 30% more BPA in their bodies

than other adults. Alternatives already exist and are gaining ground: bisphenol-based receipts fell from roughly 93% in 2017 to 86% in 2022, while non-bisphenol versions rose from 5% to 14%, and Washington State has banned bisphenols from all thermal paper as of this year. The substitutes are not well studied, however. Pergafast 201 is in about 12% of receipts; a 2026 study found it is less readily absorbed through skin but may linger longer in the body, and Washington's Department of Ecology concluded it and digital receipts are safer than bisphenols. Another alternative, NKK-1304, was only first described in the literature in 2023. Businesses can also simply offer digital receipts or none at all.

Replacing BPA with BPS illustrates the "regrettable substitution" problem: banning chemicals one at a time can push industry toward less-studied compounds that turn out to be as bad or worse. OEHHA scientists made this point in a 2016 paper, arguing that evaluating chemicals individually is inefficient and invites replacement with uncharacterized substances, while grouping them allows earlier identification of hazards. Class-based regulation lets agencies apply what's known about well-studied chemicals to their close relatives, account for cumulative exposure, and work more efficiently. California has taken this approach before, including SB 1266 (Limón) banning bisphenols in children's teething toys and AB 2515 (Papan, Chapter 1008, Statutes of 2024) banning PFAS as a class in menstrual products.

Proposed Law: This bill would ban paper receipts made with intentionally added bisphenol A starting January 1, 2028, and receipts made with any intentionally added bisphenol starting January 1, 2029. Specifically, this bill would:

1. Prohibit, on and after January 1, 2028, a person from manufacturing, distributing, or offering for sale a paper proof of purchase (receipt) containing intentionally added bisphenol A, as defined, and, on and after January 1, 2029, containing any intentionally added bisphenols, as defined.
2. Authorize DTSC to enforce a violation of those provisions by considering, on a case-by-case basis, the enforcement mechanism and an administrative penalty not to exceed \$5,000 for a first violation, and not to exceed \$10,000 for each subsequent violation.
 - a. Require DTSC, in determining the amount of an administrative penalty, to consider the following factors:
 - i. The nature and severity of the violation.
 - ii. The good or bad faith of the person in violation.
 - iii. The history of prior violations, if any.
 - iv. Evidence that the violation was willful.
 - v. The extent that the person has cooperated with the department.
3. Require all penalties collected pursuant to this bill to be deposited into TSCA, to be available for expenditure by DTSC upon appropriation by the Legislature, for its enforcement of this prohibition.

4. Require a manufacturer to use the least toxic alternative when replacing any form of bisphenol in a paper proof of purchase product.
5. Prohibit a manufacturer from replacing any form of bisphenol pursuant to these provisions with a chemical known to cause cancer or reproductive harm, or with any chemical identified by the department as a Candidate Chemical, as specified.

Related Legislation:

SB 1266 (Limon, Chapter 790, Statutes of 2024) revises the existing prohibition on BPA in a juvenile bottle or cup established by AB 1319 (Butler, Chapter 467, Statutes of 2011) to instead prohibit the manufacture or sale of any juvenile's feeding, sucking, or teething product that contains any form of bisphenol above the practical quantitation limit to be determined by DTSC.

AB 347 (Ting, Chapter 932, Statutes of 2024). Requires DTSC to enforce and ensure compliance with three existing laws that set limits for PFAS in food packaging, textiles, and juvenile products.

AB 1319 (Butler, Chapter 467, Statutes of 2011) prohibits the sale, manufacture or distribution of a bottle or cup or a liquid, food or beverage in a can, jar or plastic bottle that contains BPA if the item is primarily intended for children three years of age or younger.

AB 1148 (Sharp-Collins, 2025) prohibits, on and after January 1, 2027, a person from manufacturing, distributing, selling, or offering for sale food packaging that contains intentionally added bisphenols or ortho-phthalates. The hearing for this bill in the Senate Environmental Quality Committee was canceled at the request of the author.

AB 2244 (Ting, 2024) would have prohibited a receipt provided to a consumer by a business or created by a manufacturer from containing, beginning on January 1, 2025, internationally added BPA followed by, beginning January 1, 2026, any bisphenols. This bill was held on the suspense file in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

AB 1347 (Ting, 2023) would have prohibited, on and after January 1, 2024, a paper receipt provided to a consumer by a business from containing BPA and, on and after January 1, 2025, a paper receipt provided to a consumer by a business from containing any bisphenols. The bill died in this committee.

AB 161 (Ting, 2019) would have prohibited a paper receipt provided to a consumer by a business from containing BPA or BPS. The bill died in this committee.

Staff Comments: The Environmental Fee is an annual fee paid by California businesses and organizations that use, generate, store, or conduct activities related to, hazardous materials. "Hazardous material" is defined in Health and Safety Code (HSC) section 25501 and in Title 22 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR) section 66269.40(a)(3). The amount of the Environmental Fee is based on the number of employees employed in California by an organization.